

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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R 080840Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8190

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5246

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJ: NDP SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROPOSAL

BEGIN SUMMARY: NDP FACTIONS CONTINUE TO MEET FOR DISCUSSIONS OF THEIR DIFFERENCES WHICH REMAIN UNRESOLVED, BUT 10-MAN BI-PARTISAN COMMITTEE HAS NOW AGREED ON AND PROPOSED COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP OF PARTY. RECENT PARTY FIGHT FOLLOWED BY KIM YONG-SAM'S RESIGNATION HAS CREATED ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHICH CONTINUE TO IMPEDE SCHEDULING NEW CONVENTION AND OTHER FORWARD MOVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JUNE 30, NDP COMMITTEE OF TEN REPRESENTING TWO MAJOR FACTIONS IN PARTY, MAINSTREAM AND NON-MAINSTREAM, AGREED TO PROPOSAL THAT NDP SHOULD ELIMINATE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT AND REPLACE IT WITH COMMITTEE RULE. UNDER NEW PROPOSAL, SEVERAL "SUPREME COMMISSIONERS" WOULD ASSUME LEADERSHIP OF PARTY HEADED BY CHAIRMAN TO BE CALLED "SENIOR SUPREME COMMISSIONER." AUTHORITY WOULD REMAIN WITH COMMISSIONERS, HOWEVER, AND NOT "SENIOR" MAN WHO MAY ARBITRATE BUT WILL NOT "RULE."

2. COMMITTEE PROPOSAL ESSENTIALLY IS ONLY A SUGGESTION AND MAIN-CONFIDENTIAL

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STREAM AND NON-MAINSTREAM ARE STILL DIVIDED OVER SIGNIFICANT

DETAILS. MAINSTREAM WANTS TO LIMIT NUMBERS OF SUPREME COMMISSIONERS TO NO MORE THAN FIVE AND TO ELECT ALL COMMISSIONERS FROM FLOOR AT FUTURE NATIONAL CONVENTION WHERE HOLD

MAJORITY. NON-MAINSTREAM, CONCERNED THAT THEY WOULD BE OUTNUMBERED IN CONVENTION FLOOR FIGHT, INSISTS THAT COMMISSIONERS BE AT LEAST SEVEN IN NUMBER AND BE CHOSEN AND CONFIRMED IN PRELIMINARY FACTIONAL MEETINGS. FACTIONAL DIVVY-UP OF COMMISSIONERS WOULD HELP MEET CONCERN OF NON-MAINSTREAM WHICH IS TO PREVENT FUTURE PRESIDENT FROM HOLDING VIRTUAL ABSOLUTE PARTY POWER THAT KIM YONG-SAM WIELDED.

3. WHILE SEVERAL JUNIOR PARTY MEMBERS HAVE CONFIDED TO EMBOFFS THAT FIVE OR SEVEN MAN RULE CAN AT BEST SEVERELY WEAKEN PARTY AND SHOULD ONLY BE PROVISIONAL POLICY, FACT REMAINS THAT MAJORITY OF NDP INCLUDING SENIOR LEADERSHIP SEE PLAN AS ONLY WORKABLE ONE FOR INDEFINITE FUTURE. ALL ARE QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT DIA-LOGUE IS NOW CONTINUING BETWEEN FACTIONS WHICH WAS NOT TRUE ONE MONTH AGO.

4. ASIDE FROM THE BASIC DISAGREEMENT OVER MEANS OF ELECTING ITS LEADERSHIP, NDP MEMBERS ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT LEGAL TECHNICALITIES RESULTING FROM FACTIONAL FIGHT WHICH DISSOLVED CONVENTION HELD IN MAY AND LED TO KIM YONG-SAM'S RESIGNATION FROM PRESIDENCY. SINCE PARTY CONSTITUTION STATES EXPLICITLY THAT PARTY PRESIDENT MUST CALL FOR NEW CONVENTION AND THERE IS NO PARTY PRESIDENT, PARTY MIGHT HAVE TO DISSOLVE, REORGANIZE, AND WRITE NEW CONSTITUTION IN ORDER TO FUNCTION. WHILE SOURCES BELIEVE THERE MAY BE OTHER WAYS OUT OF THIS IMPASSE, IT IS FURTHER COMPLICATION, DELAYING PROGRESS IN RECONCILIATION. ONE SENIOR NDP OFFICIAL INDICATED TO EMBOFF THAT THIS REORGANIZATION COULD BE USED BY ANTI-GOVERNMENT HARDLINERS WITHIN PARTY TO PURGE NDP OF MEMBERS TIED TOO CLOSELY WITH ROKG. SUCH AN ATTEMPT, OF COURSE, WOULD FURTHER DIVIDE PARTY.

6. ONE MINOR MYSTERY WHICH PERSISTS IS WHY KIM YONG-SAM LEFT COUNTRY AT THIS STAGE IN PARTY'S RECONCILIATION ATTEMPTS. HE HAS BEEN PRIVATELY CRITICIZED BY HIS OWN SUPPORTERS FOR TAKING TRIP TO JAPAN AND U.S. AT THIS TIME. SOME MAINSTREAMERS ARE SAYING PUBLICLY, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE KIM WAS SUCH A FOCUS OF DISAGREE-  
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MENT WITHIN PARTY, HIS ABSENCE MAY MAKE NEGOTIATIONS EASIER. ONE SENIOR JOURNALIST COMMENTED THAT KIM'S ABSENCE FROM COUNTRY ONLY PROVES HIS PRESENCE IS INCONSEQUENTIAL AND THAT PARTY AS WHOLE DOESN'T NEED HIM ANYMORE.

7. GOVERNMENT PARTY ATTITUDES TOWARD CONTINUING NDP DISARRAY ARE MIXTURE OF SCORN AND RELISH OVER OPPOSITION MISFORTUNE AND SOME CONCERN (BUT NOT TOO MUCH) THAT LACK OF RESPONSIBLE FUNCTIONING

OPPOSITION WILL WORK TO ROKG'S DISADVANTAGE IN LONGER TERM.  
SEVERAL HAVE ADMITTED THAT ROKG AGENCIES ARE FINANCING BOTH SIDES  
OF NDP CONFLICT. DRP ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MUN TELLS US  
PRESIDENT PAK IS NOT OPENLY ADMITTING PREFERENCE FOR EITHER SIDE  
OF NDP STRUGGLE NOR FOR KIND OF OUTCOME HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE.  
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